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"I have learned of my master, the immortal Theophile, to worship what is beautiful, to adore what is superb."

"In France, at the present moment," continued Ponto patronizingly, "Gavrolles represents the school of super-sensuous personal yearning. In his last book of poems, 'Parfums de la Chair,' and particularly in that superb fragment, 'Cameo Satanique,' he has applied the connecting link between the celestial appetite of Gautier and the divine nausea of Baudelaire. Till Gavrolles came, the calendar of imperial passion was incomplete. What Smith, Jones and Keats are to our august poetry, that is he to the poetry of modern France."

"Ah, Monsieur, forbear!" cried the Frenchman. "You overwhelm me with shame. Such praise—before the master!"

"I will go further," cried Ponto recklessly, "and I will fearlessly assert that in the golden roll of the fearless and fecund Parisian Parnassus, there is no more affluent name than that of my friend Gavrolles. His 'Chant Aromatique' to the Venus of Dahomey would alone entitle him to a place in that Pantheon where the names of Victor Hugo and Achille de Gauville shine effulgent, while his masterly management of the Sestina, in his great address to myself, is only to be compared with the Titanic sculpture of Michael Angelo, or the colossal imagery of Potts."

Serena smiled gloomily. He was familiar with that sort of praise, as addressed to himself, but with all his cynicism, he scarcely approved of its lavish application to an obscure Frenchman. The fact was that the whole speech formed part and parcel of a eulogistic article, in Ponto's best manner, then in type for the "Megatherium," a widely circulated literary journal in which nepotism and malitiously formed equal parts.

"By the way," observed Serena, still quietly at work, "I see that MacAlpine has been falling foul of our friend Potts in the North British."

MacAlpine was a cantankerous critic hailing from beyond the Border, and with a Highland disregard of consequences in the expression of his literary opinions. Ponto turned livid.

"MacAlpine," he exclaims, "bears to the immortal Potts the relation that a leper does to the Paian Apollo. It is well known that MacAlpine has been guilty of murder, bigamy, rapine, incest and larceny, but all these are nothing compared to his fiendish and futile statement that Potts is not the most stupendous, wonderful, awe-inspiring, celestial and cosmic creature existing on this planet. MacAlpine, it is notorious, left his grandmother to starve in the workhouse, and kicked his little brother to death, but these crimes are venial by the side of his hateful and hellish assertion that your divine and spirit-compelling picture of 'Psyche watching the sleep of Eros' is out of proportion."

Serena sighed, then smiled.

"Do you know, my dear Ponto, I sometimes think that a little hostile criticism is refreshing. I really find it so, when it comes in my way."

Ponto shuddered.

"The only true attitude of criticism is that of worship," he exclaimed. "The man who, in contemplating your consummate masterpiece, could be conscious of any feeling save of the surging forces of cosmic yearning, flowering into the form of perfect idealization, and shining with the reflected light of coruscating eternities of sterile pain—such a man, I say, is capable of any social crime, and incapable of any æsthetic perception."

"Pardon me," returned Serena. "What you say is doubtless very flattering, but if criticism is pure worship, how do you account for your own attacks on the literary productions of the enemies of the æsthetic school?"

"All modern schools but one are execrable," returned Ponto, with a grinding of the teeth and a waving of the hand. "It is enough for us to pronounce that they are not—Art! In approaching them we do not criticise—we simply obliterate; we crush, as we crush a reptile or an unclean thing. The man who denies absolute perfection to Potts, or universal mastery to Blanco Serena, at once proclaims, not merely his incompetence to speak on any artistic subject whatever, but by inference his moral degradation as a human being. We wave him from our vision—we wipe him out. He is a loathsome Philistine, an outcast, physically and intellectually abominable. Such a man once said, in my hearing, that 'Mademoiselle de Maupin' was not the purest, wholesomest, most supremely sane and salutary book produced since the Divine Comedy, and that, on the whole, he preferred Wordsworth to Gautier as a moral

teacher. My whole soul revolted. I shrank from that man with a shudder, and I am convinced that the wretch is ethically lost and intellectually paralytic."

This is only an extract referring to the peculiar artistic tendencies of a year or two ago; later on there is a discussion of the peculiar ideas of literature and especially of journalism which obtain among certain classes and which have already borne considerable fruit in New York. The book can give an excellent reason for its existence, and, besides, the matter is artistically presented.

SANFORD R. GIFFORD.

WE have been requested to publish these beautiful lines written shortly after the death of Sanford R. Gifford, and originally published in the *New York Tribune* of November 14, 1880. Those who knew and loved the artist and who cling to all their memories of him, will be glad to preserve this tribute to his genius and charming personality. Those who did not know him may still appreciate the beauty of the lines, which we reproduce with pleasure.

GIFFORD.

I.

THE CLOSED STUDIO.

This was a magician's cell:
Beauty's self obeyed his spell!
When the air was gloom without,
Grace and Color played about
Yonder easel. Many a sprite,
Golden-winged with heaven's light,
Let the upper skies go drear,
Spreading his rare plumage here.

Skyward now,—alas the day!—
See the truant Ariels play!
Cloud and air with light they fill,
Wandering at idle will,
Nor (with half their tasks undone)
Stay to mourn the master gone.
Only in this hollow room,
Now, the stillness and the gloom.

II.

OF WINTER NIGHTS.

When the long nights return, and find us met
Where he was wont to meet us, and the flame
On the deep hearth-stone gladdens as of old,
And there is cheer, as ever in that place,
How shall our utmost nearing close the gap
Known, but till then scarce measured? Or what light
Of cheer for us, his gracious presence gone,
His speech delayed, till none shall fail to miss
That halting voice, yet sure; speaking, it seemed,
The one apt word? For well the painter knew
Art's alchemy and law; her nobleness
Was in his soul, her wisdom in his speech,
And loyalty was housed in that true heart,
Gentle yet strong, and yielding not one whit
Of right or purpose. Now, not more afar
The light of last year's Yule fire than the smile
Of Gifford, nor more irclaimable
Its vapor mingled with the wintry air.

EDMUND C. STEDMAN.